

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-9, 19-30, 38-39, 42-43, and 45-46 without prejudice and amend the claims as follows:

1-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) A method of processing a metal conductive layer on a substrate, comprising:

(a) placing a substrate on a substrate support wherein the substrate has a metal conductive layer disposed on a top surface of the substrate, and wherein the substrate has stray metal conductive material on one or more other surfaces of the substrate;

(b) rotating the substrate support;

(c) while the substrate support is rotating, contacting the top surface of the substrate with a first liquid etching composition in order to remove portions of the top surface of the metal conductive layer;

(d) contacting the one or more other surfaces of the substrate with a second liquid etching composition in order to remove stray metal conductive material thereon; and

(e) exposing the metal conductive layer to an etchant gas after the contacting step (c) in order to planarize the top surface of the metal conductive layer.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein step (e) is performed after the contacting step (d).

12. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the metal conductive layer comprises copper.

13. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the substrate is rotated in a direction of rotation and the liquid etching composition is delivered in a direction of delivery, and wherein the direction of rotation and the direction of delivery are the same.

14. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the first liquid etching composition and the second liquid etching composition comprise one or more of the same or different etchants, selected from the group consisting of nitric acid, hydrochloric acid, peroxygen compounds, and combinations thereof.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10 wherein the liquid etching composition is delivered to the top surface of the substrate by one or more top nozzles and the same same or a different liquid etching composition is delivered to the one or more other surfaces of the substrate by one or more additional nozzles.

16. (Original) The method of claim 10 further comprising contacting the metal conductive layer with a rinse composition.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10 further comprising igniting the etchant gas of step (d) (e) into a plasma.

18. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the etchant gas comprises a chlorine-containing material.

19-43. (Canceled)

44. (Previously Presented) A method of processing a metal conductive layer on a substrate, comprising:

(a) placing a substrate on a substrate support supporting a substrate in an electroplating cell on an electroplating platform;

(b) depositing a copper layer on a top surface of the substrate, wherein the substrate has stray copper on one or more other surfaces of the substrate;

- (c) moving the substrate to an etch-back module on the electroplating platform;
- (d) rotating the substrate support;
- (e) while the substrate support is rotating, spraying the top surface of the substrate with a first liquid etching composition in order to remove portions of the top surface of the copper layer, the spray being directed in the direction of rotation;
- (f) contacting the one or more other surfaces of the substrate with a liquid etching composition in order to remove stray copper thereon; and
- (g) exposing the metal conductive layer to an etchant gas after the contacting step (e) in order to planarize the top surface of the copper layer.

45-46. (Cancelled)